

Message Text

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SUBJECT: OECD STUDY OF FUTURE OF INDUSTRIALIZED
SOCIETIES

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1. SECRETARIAT PLEASED WITH BRANSON NOMINATION AND FORESEES NO PROBLEMS WITH HIS APPOINTMENT. LESOURNE IS NOW CONFIRMED AS DIRECTOR AND IS EXPECTED TO BEGIN WORK ON JAN 26. SECRETARIAT RECOMMENDS THAT BRANSON COME TO PARIS FOR CONSULTATIONS IN WEEK OF JAN 26 OR IN THE NEXT WEEK SO THAT LESOURNE WILL HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO FAMILIARIZE HIMSELF FURTHER WITH PROJECT BEFORE MEETING WITH BRANSON. IF BRANSON WISHES TO COME TO PARIS SOONER, HOWEVER, SECRETARIAT WILL BE HAPPY TO MEET WITH HIM AND WILL SEEK TO ARRANGE MEETING WITH LESOURNE. SECRETARIAT WILL, OF COURSE, PAY COSTS OF BRANSON'S TRAVEL. JAPANESE DEPUTY DIRECTOR KOGANE IS EXPECTED TO COME ON THE JOB DURING SECOND WEEK OF FEBRUARY.

2. SECRETARIAT AND JAPANESE HAVE ASKED WHO OUR REPRESENTATIVE TO STEERING COMMITTEE WILL BE. JAPANESE HAVE INDICATED THAT SABURO OKITA WILL BE THEIR REPRESENTATIVE IF OTHER MAJOR GOVERNMENTS DESIGNATE SIMILARLY QUALIFIED AND HIGH-LEVEL OFFICIALS AND THAT HE IS PREPARED TO

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SERVE AS CHAIRMAN. IF OTHER MEMBERS OF STEERING COMM-

ITTEE ARE NOT OF A SIMILAR LEVEL, OKITA WOULD CHOOSE TO SERVE ON ADVISORY PANEL.

3. SECRETARIAT ATTACHES CONSIDERABLE IMPORTANCE TO STEERING COMMITTEE, NOT ONLY AS PRIMARY VEHICLE FOR ASSURING THAT WORK OF RESERACH TEAM IS WELL DIRECTED AND RELEVANT BUT ALSO AS PRIMARY CHANNEL FOR ENSURING THAT RESEARCH RESULTS RECEIVE ATTENTION AT HIGH LEVELS OF PARTICIPATING GOVERNMENTS. SECRETARIAT THERFORE WELCOMES OKITA'S INTEREST IN CHAIRING STEERING COMMITTEE AND HAS URGED US AND OTHER PARTICIPANTS TO DESIGNATE OFFICIALS WITH SIMILAR QUALIFICATIONS. SECRETARIAT ANTICIPATES THAT STEERING COMMITTEE WILL MEET THREE TIMES A YEAR AND IS AIMING AT FEBRUARY OR EARLY MARCH FOR THE FIRST SUCH MEETING.

4. MISSION COMMENT: WE URGE DEPARTMENT TO GIVE EARLY CONSIDERATION TO SELECTION OF APPROPRIATE REPRESENTATIVE TO STEERING COMMITTEE. WE AGREE ON IMPORTANCE OF STEERING COMMITTEE AND THINK THAT OKITO WOULD BE APPROPRIATE CHAIRMAN BECAUSE OF JAPAN'S ROLE IN PROPOSING PROJECT AND HIS OWN QUALIFICATIONS AS A PROMINENT ECONOMIST WITH CLOSE LINKS TO GOVERNMENT. WE RECOGNIZE THAT LACK OF CLEAR-CUT "HOME" FOR THIS KIND OF WORK IN USG MAKES SELECTION OF US REP EXCEEDINGLY DIFFICULT. ONE POSSIBILITY WHICH COMES TO MIND WOULD BE A MEMBER OF CEA. WE NOTE THAT OKITA'S PRESENT GOJ POSITION AS PRESIDENT OF JAPAN OVERSEAS DEVELOPMENT FUND WOULD NOT NORMALLY BRING HIM INTO DIRECT CONTACT WITH OECD ACTIVITIES OF THIS KIND. DEPARTMENT MAY ALSO WISH TO LOOK BEYOND OUR NORMAL RANGE OF OECD BACK-STOPPING OFFICES FOR US. REP. WHILE A PERSON PRESENTLY HOLDING A SENIOR USG POSITION WOULD CLEARLY BE PREFERABLE, DEPARTMENT MIGHT ALSO CONSIDER TAKING ON A DISTINGUISHED FORMER GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL WITH STRONG INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC CREDENTIALS AS US REPRESENTATIVE FOR THIS PURPOSE.

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